BOSTON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN THE BOSTON DAY HIGH SCHOOLS

Submitted by

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INTRODUCTION

Boston, probably the most historical city in the United States, was founded in 1630. Within the boundaries of Boston occurred the Boston Tea Party, the Boston Massacre and various other stirring events that shaped the destiny of our land.

Boston call well point with pride to its early educational activities that produced men like John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Cotton Mather, John Hancock, and others. Popular education in America had its birth in Boston. The Public Latin School was established in 1635 and the oldest school in the world supported by taxation was founded in the neighboring town of Dorchester which was later annexed to Boston. In 1682 the old Colonial writing and ciphering schools were established and in 1821 the English High School was opened--the oldest public general high school in the United States. The city is proud of its system of public education from the time that Philemon Pormort was appointed master of the Latin School in 1635 to the present day when it now maintains an efficient corps of teachers numbering almost 5,000 and a pupil enrollment of more than 147,000.

Boston is an outstanding city of diversified manufacture and commerce. It is not a city of one dominant manufacture nor is its import and export business specialized in one line.

It boasts of the chief seaport in New England and one of the largest in the United States.

A history of Boston's population begins a few years after the turn of the seventeenth century. The first arrivals in Boston in 1630 numbered between 700 and 800. With later arrivals this number was increased to 2,000 making Boston the largest settlement on the American coast at that time. In 1820, the population numbered more than 43,000 and with an increasing number of immigrants the figure rose to 136,881 in 1850; 670,585 in 1910; and 781,188 in 1930.

Boston ranks foremost as a city of culture and learning. In the city of Boston and its immediate vicinity are located the following colleges and universities: Harvard University, Boston University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston College, Simmons College, Emmanual College, Tufts College, Northeastern University, as well as many other smaller institutions of learning. Its libraries, museums, and ever so many historical sites all contribute toward making it the educational center of the world.

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this thesis to trace the development of commercial education in the day high schools of the city of Boston. In order to understand the changes taking place from the time commercial work first appeared in any high school to the present, it is necessary to consider the changing objectives of commercial education and the forces producing these changes. In the light of these changing objectives this thesis will attempt to show how the curriculum has been reorganized to meet the demands of society.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Original as well as secondary sources furnished the required information. Early records of the town of Boston on file in the City Hall, various acts of the Colonies on record at the State House, school documents and records on file in the three principal high schools considered in this study, i.e., Public Latin School, English High School, and the High School of Commerce, superintendent's reports and school board reports all furnished original data. Textbooks, books dealing with the history of commercial education, and pamphlets issued by the school committee of the city of Boston were the chief sources of secondary information.

WHAT IS COMMERCIAL EDUCATION?

Before an intelligent study can be made of the secondary commercial curriculum it is necessary to come to an understanding as to what is embraced in the term "commercial education". The Report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education states:[1] "By secondary commercial education this committee understands that training of the secondary school, direct and related, the aim of which is to equip young people for entrance into business life. Assuredly those going into business are entitled to an education, which, so far as possible, will give breadth of view and catholicity of interest, as well as facility in performing some specific task in the business world. The committee believes, therefore, that secondary commercial education can and should be made liberal, and at the same time prepare for some branch or branches of business."

The important part of the foregoing is "the aim of which is to equip young people for entrance into business life". The term "business life" is used to denote participation in that economic activity which supplies human wants as distinguished from other social-service activities. It includes all the business services that have to do with organizing, financing, staffing, housing, and managing a commercial enterprise as distinguished from those that have

1 United States Bureau of Education Bulletin, 1919, No. 55 Business Training in the Secondary Schools

to do with manual productivity in such an enterprise. It is not to be expected that fully equipped business men and women will be graduated from high school. However, it is to be expected that those graduates of high schools, who have taken the commercial course, will have greater prospects of ultimate success than those not attending high school. Again, it should be noted that high school commercial education is not confined to those who will graduate. It is equally concerned with those who are likely to drop out at various stages in the high school.

Objectives of Commercial Education

There is considerable disagreement as to objectives by writers and much discussion of social-economic objectives versus preparation for employment. Whereas the Report of the Commission on Reorganization of Secondary Education, in 1919, emphasized the preparing of young people for some branch of business, recent studies have shown definite trends toward giving all students an understanding of business in order to fit them for a society in which business is one of the great social forces.

A study made in 1933 summarized the trends of aims in business education as follows:[1]

1. Continued emphasis upon the aim of preparing pupils for simple office positions.

1 Jessie Graham, The Evolution of Business Education in the United States and its Implications for the Preparation of Secondary Teachers of Business Subjects. So. Calif. Ed. Monographs 1933-34 Series #2 pp 52 - 76

2. Increased emphasis upon the adaptation of business education to the needs of social and civic life.
3. A trend toward giving necessary business information and skills for all pupils for use in personal, social, and civic life.
4. A trend toward universal recognition of the identification of the aims of business education with those of all secondary education.
5. A trend toward the analysis of the individual business subjects resulting in statements of aim and objective determination of course content.

Nichols[1] states that all the objectives of secondary education are objectives of commercial education. He lists the objectives of high school commercial education as follows:

1. To make the largest possible contribution toward the achievement of the six non-vocational aims of secondary education which are usually stated as follows:
    a. Health
    b. Command of fundamental processes
    c. Worthy home membership
    d. Civic education

1 Frederick G. Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School pp 240 - 241

e. Worthy use of leisure

f. Ethical character

2. To develop occupational intelligence to the highest possible degree having in mind business organization, management, service, and employment.

3. To develop the kind and degree of vocational skill required for successful functioning in a recognized initial contract-job.

In setting up desirable objectives of secondary school commercial education it has been contended that skill should be one of the desirable outcomes of business training in the high school period. Formerly there was only one way to make a beginning in a business career--through an office position, usually as a bookkeeper. Later the stenographic field furnished the best means of approach. Today while both of these are most desirable there are other approaches available. Machines have invaded the business field and new skills are required. Office workers are expected to possess them. The general high school cannot furnish all the skills, However, the high school should furnish a sound fundamental education, an understanding of business relationships and one worthwhile skill to each pupil in the commercial course.

There has been a sincere effort for a number of years

to make the principles of commercial education square with the principles of general education. Great progress has been made in research in the field of commercial education. More research is needed to determine what social and economic values should be tied-up with commercial subjects, what the present demand of business is in the way of training needs, what additional types of employment are open to pupils in addition to the traditional bookkeeping and stenographic fields, and in what way the desired goals can be achieved in less time and with more efficiency. How the commercial work in the day high schools of the city of Boston has changed in attempting to meet the various objectives set up for commercial education is shown in the following pages.

EARLY HISTORY OF COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN BOSTON HIGH SCHOOLS

Public Latin School

It is common knowledge that the Public Latin School played an important part in the early history of education in Boston. From the time of its founding in 1635 to the present day it has been entirely concerned with preparing young men for the university. However, it is interesting to note that there were subjects taught in this school that in later years formed an important part of the high school commercial curriculum. Inasmuch as it was the first school established in Boston, it is only logical that a study be made of its earliest history in order to ascertain if any branches of commercial education did emanate from this source.

So far as education of a "commercial" nature in the Latin school is concerned, this thesis, in order to conform to its title must refer only to those classes in this school that might roughly be compared with our high school commercial classes. In various school committee reports published during the nineteenth century, the subjects of arithmetic, geography, and penmanship are mentioned in those sections dealing with the regulation of the Public Latin School. Inasmuch as the curriculum at times extended over six years and even eight years, it is assumed that the

upper four years represents the high school, and if geography, arithmetic, or penmanship were taught during these years it may be assumed further that commercial education was carried on in the higher groups of the Public Latin School.

Early Course of Study

The course of study from 1635 to 1814 was made up entirely of the classics.[1] In 1814 the curriculum was extended from a four year course to a five year course. On June 28, 1814, the sub-committee for the Public Latin School, appointed by the school committee, made the following recommendations: "The two highest classes shall be taught arithmetic and geography as required for admission to Harvard College" and "lads shall be required to write in a fair hand".[2] In the 1803 Harvard entrance requirements arithmetic and geography were specified as required subjects. This factor apparently lead to the recommendations of 1814. It cannot be ascertained definitely with the available data at what dates these subjects were actually introduced into the Latin School. The geography and arithmetic requirements for Harvard College were taught either in the South Writing School or the Public Latin School.

In the curriculum for 1823 it is specified that LaCroix's Arithmetic and Worcester's Geography be taught in the last two years of school. Roughly, the last two

1 Pauline Holmes, A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School 1635-1935 pp 252 - 269
2 Ibid. pp 83 - 84

years corresponds to the junior and senior classes. It was advised by the school committee of that time that these subjects be offered in order that the pupils be well prepared to meet the Harvard College requirements.

One can readily see that the subjects of penmanship, arithmetic, and geography did not form an important part of the Latin School curriculum. They were taught, however, in grades corresponding to the present-day high school and the following brief chronological record[1] is adequate enough to understand the part this school played in the development of commercial education in the city of Boston.

From 1835 through 1851 the catalogue of the Boston Public Latin School was not published. There is a record from the testimony of President Eliot of Harvard that the curriculum of the school remained unchanged.[2]

1852 - a six year course. Arithmetic and geography were taught in the first two years but inasmuch as it was a six year course the time involved could not compare with our regular four year high school course. Penmanship was taught every year except the last year.

1870 - The teaching of penmanship in the upper four grades was discontinued. Geography in "relation to climate, soil, manufactures, and commerce" was being taught.

1876 - eight year course. Geography was taught during the first six years. This was in effect from 1876 to 1879.

1 Public Latin School Catalogues 1824-1834, 1852-1906
2 Address delivered by President Eliot of Harvard at the 275 th anniversary of the Latin School, 1910

1879 - The course of instruction was changed from an eight year course to a six year course and thence to a four year course for grammar school graduates.

1891 - From this date on there is no mention of penmanship, arithmetic, or geography in the various curricula published.

English High School

Approximately 150 years after the opening of the Public Latin School the citizens of Boston voiced the opinion that the Latin School was not sufficient to fulfill the educational needs of all the older boys in the town. The curriculum of the Latin School prepared the boys for the university and was not designed to prepare boys for active business life in the community.

During 1820 the subject of a new school to prepare boys for mercantile and mechanical pursuits was discussed freely among the citizens. They objected to sending their boys out of town to a special academy to receive instruction that the Boston educational system did not afford. They argued that their boys who intended to enter business did not have the same opportunities as those who intended to enter college. All this discussion came to a head at a town meeting held in Faneuil Hall, January 15, 1821, when the citizens voted to establish the "English Classical School", designed, in the words of the committee, "to give a child an education that shall fit him for active life, and shall serve as a foundation for eminence in his profession, whether mercantile or mechanical". The committee had reported that the establishment of such a school "would raise the literary and scientific character of the town, would

incite our youth to a laudable ambition of distinguishing themselves in the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge, and would give strength and stability to the civil and religious institutions of our country".[1] The school, the site of which was on the grounds of the present State House, opened in May, 1821.

There is no doubt of the importance of the town meeting that established this kind of education, yet it is interesting to read a brief account of the meeting from the newspapers published at the time. One reported: "At the Town Meeting yesterday it was voted to establish the English Classical School; and establish a law requiring the occupants of houses to clear the snow from the sidewalks within 24 hours from its falling under penalty of $4 for neglect and $2 for every subsequent day of neglect".[2] Another paper reported the meeting more completely with the following paragraph: "The new school which the town has with so much unaminity voted to add to its already excellent system of education is to be composed of boys from 12 to 15 years of age, entered annually; the course of studies to be for three years, in yearly classes; lads suitably qualified can be admitted to advanced standing. Boys to be admitted must be well qualified with reading, writing, English grammar and arithmetic as far as simple proportion".[3] The studies reported in this article following the above

1 Semi-Centennial of the English High School May 2 1871 p 102
2 Boston Daily Advertiser, January 18, 1821 p 1
3 Columbian Centinel, January 17, 1821 p 1

paragraph are apparently incomplete and in order to get the most accurate data available, the Boston Town Records for 1821[1] were consulted.

First Course of Study

Studies of the First Class - Composition, Reading from the Approved Authors; Exercises in Criticism comprising critical analyses of the language, grammar and style of the best English authors, their errors and beauties; Declamation; Geography; Arithmetic (cont'd) and Algebra.

Studies of the Second Class - Composition, Reading; Exercises in Criticism; Declamation; Algebra; Ancient and Modern History; Logic; Geometry; Trigonometry; Mensuration of Heights and Distances; Navigation and Surveying; Mensuration of Superficials and Solids; Forensic Discussions.

Studies of the Third Class - Composition; Exercises in Criticism; Declamation; Mathematics; Logic; History (particularly that of the United States) Natural Philosophy including Astronomy; Moral and Political Philosophy.

Although the English High School was established primarily to aid boys who intended to pursue a business career, it may be noted that in the above list of prescribed subjects only two studies, i.e., arithmetic and geography are now taught in high school commercial departments. In the 1821

1 Boston Town Records, 1821, Volume 37 pp 167 - 169

records there was no mention of any other subject that later became a part of the commercial curriculum. Yet, in a pamphlet published in 1922 by the department heads of the English High School,[1] it is stated that penmanship and bookkeeping were also introduced in 1821. In order to verify this statement the original records in the school were examined and it was found that geography, bookkeeping, and arithmetic were taught by the early instructors in this school. Although there is no mention of penmanship either in the official list of prescribed studies or in the individual teacher's reports for 1821, there is specified in the School Committee Records for 1838 that the "several divisions shall also receive instruction in spelling, reading, writing, English grammar, declamation, composition, and the French language".[2] It is reasonable to suppose that penmanship became a part of the English High School curriculum within a few years after its establishment.

For the purpose of tracing the development of commercial education we can accurately state there there were three subjects of a commercial nature offered in this school at the time of its establishment and one added but a few years later. They were arithmetic, bookkeeping, geography, and penmanship.

During the first fifty years of its existence, the

1 Reports of Departments of Instruction E. H. S. 1922-23
2 Boston Town Records - 1838

English High School did not make any change affecting the teaching of these four subjects. In the various City Documents from 1821 onward, the Regulations of the English High School as set down by the School Committee remained very much the same. In the curricula outlined from year to year in the School Committee reports there is always to be found the following requirement: "Review of the preparatory studies in the textbooks authorized to be used in the grammar and writing schools".[1] From this statement it is reasonably certain that penmanship, bookkeeping, arithmetic, and geography continued to be taught at the English High School because these subjects were first introduced in the grammar and writing schools.

The "Visiting Committees"

In an examination of the early Boston City Documents there was no published record of a "visiting committee" calling at the English High School to personally examine each pupil. However, in 1848 the report of the school committee does make mention of a visiting committee calling at the school that year. From the samples of questions recorded it can be readily seen that their geography and arithmetic were the forerunners of commercial geography and commercial arithmetic. The textbooks mentioned for the teaching of these subjects are the following: Robinson's Book-keeping, North American Arithmetic, and Worcester's

1 Boston City Documents, 1841, City Document #21 p 19

or Field's Geography.

During these visits the committee made recommendations from time to time bearing on the teaching of these subjects. Invariably the importance of penmanship was emphasized and it was required that the pupils develop a "fine or running hand". In the recommendations of 1841 it was suggested that the teaching of the geography of the United States be given more thought than the teaching of geography of the foreign lands. "In history and geography we would recommend a more careful attention to our own country. These are of primary importance and a boy or girl should be taught thoroughly the history and geography of his or her own country before going beyond anything more than the outlines of those of other countries. In most schools this rule is not observed with sufficient care. We especially found it difficult to obtain correct answers to questions about the condition and government of our own country...."[1] Book-keeping was regarded as a highly important subject not only because of its practical value but also because of the practice in penmanship it afforded. One committee reported as follows: "Independent of the important practical information obtained by a knowledge of book-keeping even by single entry, it is an excellent practice in penmanship and more agreeable for the advanced classes than the continued use of the ordinary copy books"[2].

1 Boston City Documents, 1841, City Document #29 p 3
2 Ibid. p 12

GIRL'S HIGH SCHOOL

In 1825 a high school for girls was established in the town of Boston and at its opening session 286 girls applied for admission. The course of study was designed to cover three years and among the subjects taught, which later became an important part of the commercial curriculum, were: modern and ancient geography, intellectual and written arithmetic, and book-keeping by single entry. A large part of the curriculum was made up of grammar, mathematics, history, and science. Due largely to dissention within the school ranks, particularly among the masters of the writing schools, who claimed that the new school attracted their best pupils, the school was abandoned in 1828.

From 1828 to 1855 the educational needs of the girls were taken care of by the grammar and writing schools. The girls were allowed to remain in these schools two years longer than the boys and it was regarded by the school authorities that this extra two-year privilege made up for the lack of a high school for girls.

In 1853 a petition containing 3,000 signatures calling for the establishment of high school courses for girls was presented to the school committee. At a meeting of the school committee on November 14, 1854, it was decided to introduce high school studies for girls into the existing

normal school.

A new state law of 1827 specifying certain subjects be taught in communities throughout the commonwealth was responsible in some measure for the founding of this school. The law referred to read as follows: "....And every city or town or district containing 500 families or householders shall be provided with such teacher or teachers for such term of time as shall be equivalent to 24 months, for one school in a year and shall be provided with a master of good morals competent to instruct in addition to the branches of learning aforesaid (orthography, reading, writing, English grammar, geography, mathematics, and good behavior) the history of the United States, book-keeping by single entry, geometry, surveying, and algebra...."[1]

Thus the normal school, established in 1852 to prepare young women for the teaching profession, came to house the high school and acquired the name of the "Girl's High and Normal School".

In the school committee regulations for 1855 pertaining to the Girl's High and Normal School, geography is noted in the course of study. However, the following statement is evidence that other business subjects were taught the girls. This statement, grouped with the list of prescribed studies, read as follows: "A thorough review of the subjects pursued in the grammar school".[2] From this

1 Laws of Massachusetts, 1825-1828, Chap. CXLIII Sec. 1 V 10
2 School Committee Documents, 1855, Regulations of the Girl's High and Normal School

regulation it may be assumed with a fair degree of accuracy that in common with the English High School, arithmetic, geography, bookkeeping, and penmanship were taught in this high school.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING SERVICE

For almost 200 years after the appointment of Philemon Pormort, in 1635, to be Boston's first teacher there was no effort made to train teachers for the profession. The teachers of the earlier schools were men, many of them clergymen or former clergymen. All were scholars and many had been educated in old Cambridge. The early laws of the colonies required towns of 50 householders to provide "a schoolmaster to teach children and youth to read and write--a discreet person of good conversation well instructed in the tongues."[1] In addition to this social obligation a certain moral obligation was imposed. Every grammar schoolmaster was required to be approved by the minister of the town and also by the ministers of the two adjacent towns.[2] For the greater part of the eighteenth century Boston depended upon the selectmen for the engaging of teachers. In 1703, the town of Boston voted "that the selectmen do take care to procure some meet person to be an assistant to Mr. Ezekiell Cheever."[3]

In 1789 the first school committee, "authorized to exercise all the powers relating to the schools and the school master", was chosen, consisting of the selectmen and one member from each ward.[4]

The school committee was reorganized in 1822, 1835

1 Province Laws, 1692-93 Chapter 26
2 Province Laws, 1701-02 Chapter 10
3 Boston Town Records - 1703
4 Jos. M. Wightman, Annals of the Primary School p 7

1854, and again in 1875 when, due to annexation and the growth of the city, the number on the committee became 116. The new committee had 25 members consisting of the mayor and 24 members elected at large, in groups of eight each, serving three years.[1]

Early Methods of Appointment to the Teaching Service

For many years most of the teachers owed their appointment to the personal interest in them by a school committeeman. The administration system in force for a number of years lent itself to this method of selecting teachers. The schools were divided into geographical divisions of the city such as Charlestown, Brighton, Roxbury, etc. Each group of schools was under the guidance and direction of five members of the school board. When a vacancy would occur, the master of the school would notify the chairman of the group of five that ruled his district. A name would be suggested by one of the five and after the candidate received a majority vote the name was then referred to the nominations committee for further approval. The appointments that were made from time to time in this manner in which favoritism could play an important part, led to bitter wrangling and much ill feeling.

Due to the efforts of Samuel R. Hall, who in Vermont in 1823, opened the first academy in the country for the training of teachers, and others, more attention was given

1 Acts of 1875, Chapter 241

to teacher training. It was Hall who said, "Educate men for the business of teaching, employ them and pay them when educated".[1] Boston was slow in realizing the need for normal schools and it was particularly lax in devising a plan for determining fitness of teachers.

Boston Normal School

The Boston Normal School, founded for the purpose of preparing young women to become teachers, was established in 1852. The instruction in the earlier years of the school required only one year for completion, but in 1888 the course was lengthened to one and one-half years; in 1892, the course was further extended to two years. In 1913 occurred a further reorganization of the work of the school. The courses of study were made three years in length, the academic content was broadened, and much of the work of the school was raised to collegiate grade. Through an act of the General Court, April 11, 1922, the school committee received permission to grant degrees of Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Science in Education to graduates of a four year course in the Boston Normal School. Through an act of the General Court (Chapter 16 of the Laws of 1926) the committee was further empowered to grant the degree of Master of Education to those completing a graduate course in the now-called Teachers College. Thus the training now offered prospective teachers by the city of Boston compares

1. Edgar W. Knight, Education in the United States, p 309

favorably with that received in schools of education not under city control.

It is difficult to indicate at what particular stage of the public school development that appointment by merit had its origin. It is likely that in 1875, when the school committee was reorganized, that the first direct step toward such appointments was made. The school committee in its annual report for 1876 discussed the duties of the board of supervisors as follows:

> "The appointment of teachers nominated for election in the School Board, without careful consideration of their qualifications, was an evil which had begun to show its disastrous effects by unmistakable signs. Personal solicitations, motives, of self-interest, kind-heartedness, a dislike to say No, when it conflicted with the charitable desire to give a needy, though perhaps incompetent aspirant a means of livelihood, had led many members of the School Board to obtain teacher's places for unfit persons and the soundness of the schools was thus in process of becoming gradually but gravely compromised. It was only through the examination of candidates by competent persons, whose certificates could be depended upon as proofs of proper qualification, that this evil could

be checked. That the conduct of examinations was felt to be one of the most important functions of the Supervisors is proved by the fact that at first it was proposed to give them the title of examiners. They were meant to attend especially to the securing of competent teachers by means of examinations, by inspection of the schools, and by the holding of biennial examinations of the scholars to test the fitness of the teachers to impart knowledge".[1]

Although this thesis attempts to trace the development of commercial education in the Boston day high schools, and this chapter the development of the teaching service, it is not until 1881 that any mention is made of a teacher of commercial branches. The catalogue of the English High School for the school year 1881-82, lists the name of Manson Seavy - Teacher of Mathematics and Bookkeeping. As explained further on in this thesis, commercial courses were not authorized in the high schools until 1897 and not introduced until 1898. Hence, teachers of commercial subjects were not required earlier.

Examinations by the Board of Supervisors

In 1906, the school committee was again reorganized and membership was reduced to five, elected at large. With the advent of the new committee all appointments were vested in the superintendent. The board of supervisors was

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, School Document No. 7 1929 p 51

given the power to examine and certify candidates for teaching positions in the city of Boston. This plan provided that examination of candidates for appointment as teachers in the public schools should be conducted at intervals by the board of supervisors; that these examinations should test the training, knowledge, aptness for teaching, and character of candidates; that the board of supervisors should grant certificates of qualification to persons successfully passing the examinations, and that the names of those successfully passing such examinations should be arranged by the board of supervisors in the order of their respective qualifications as determined by such examination.

Board of Examiners

In 1924, the school committee voted to establish a board of examiners to take over the examining, visiting, and certifying of candidates. At present the appointment of properly qualified teachers is made from the eligible list determined by the board of examiners. The present regulations regarding appointments show that:

> "Eligible lists of candidates with their respective ratings shall be established annually by the board of superintendents and issued on or about August first. Appointments of teachers, members of the supervising staff, and school nurses shall be made from the lists in effect at the time the

appointments are made. The name of candidates successfully passing prescribed examinations shall, from time to time as examinations occur, be added to said lists when the results of such examinations and the ratings of candidates shall be reported by the board of superintendents to the School Committee. Appointments to permanent positions as teachers, members of the supervising staff or school nurses shall be made from the proper eligible lists, candidates being considered in the order in which their names appear. No name shall be passed unless the person shall refuse appointment or the superintendent shall certify to the School Committee that there are good reasons why said person should not be appointed. In case the person who heads the list refuses appointment, those next in order on the list shall successively become eligible for appointment."[1]

All candidates for teaching positions must conform to the regulations governing the granting of certificates of qualification. There are no special requirements for teachers of commercial branches.

Requirements for High School Certificate

"Certificates of qualification may be granted by the board of superintendents, in accordance with the rules and regulations, to persons who present

1 Rules of the School Committee and Regulations of the Public Schools of the City of Boston, School Document #7 - 1934 pp 48, 49

satisfactory evidence of good character, health, Boston residence, citizenship, and scholarship, and satisfactory and documentary evidence of the date of birth, who successfully pass the required examinations and who meet the eligibility requirements for the particular certificate.... The requirements for the high school certificate: The degree of Master of Education, Master of Arts, or equivalent degree from a college or university approved by the board of superintendents; evidence of two years' successful experience in teaching and governing regular day schools, which experience shall include at least one year in a college or secondary school (Grades VII to XII., inclusive) approved by the board of superintendents; provided that for holders of the degree of Master of Education from the Teachers College of the City of Boston, and for the holders of the degree of Master of Education from a college or university approved by the board of superintendents which grants the degree only upon the completion of two years' work under the direction of that institution, one year's experience in teaching shall be accepted."[1]

Thus, out of its most humble beginning has emanated a system of appointing teachers that places teaching in

1 Rules of the School Committee and Regulations of the Public Schools of the City of Boston, School Document No. 7-1934 pp 22, 21, 22

the Boston schools upon a plane of excellence comparable with that of other learned professions.

CURRICULUM CHANGES AND THE PRIVATE BUSINESS SCHOOL

Many significant changes took place in the Boston schools during the last twenty-five years of the nineteenth century. Various curriculum changes, the teaching of vocational subjects, and the establishment of a commercial course were the important educational changes that took place during this quarter century.

In the report of the School Committee for 1876[1] it is stated that the course of study and the textbooks used in the various high schools differed essentially and that it was found necessary to revise the whole system of high school instruction and to fix a uniform course of study to be followed by all. The following schools began a three year uniform course of study at that time:

English High School
Girl's High School
Roxbury High School
Dorchester High School
West Roxbury High School
Brighton High School
Charlestown High School

In this three year course, among other subjects, arithmetic was taught in the first year, bookkeeping in the second year and arithmetic reviewed in the third year. There is no other mention of a commercial subject in this 'general' course, which would apply to all high schools except the Latin School, and it is assumed that the committee regarded

1 School Committee Report for 1876 - Report of the committee on high schools

the penmanship and geography taught in the grammar schools as sufficient to meet the needs of the boys and girls of the time.

One can readily see that a course of this sort would not adequately prepare a boy or girl for business. Public school officials did not believe that it was within the province of the public schools to give business training and with this lack of encouragement and cooperation from public school educators, commercial training made little progress during most of the nineteenth century.

The Private Business School

At this time private commercial schools were growing rapidly throughout the land. Industrial life in America was changing, large cities were springing up, new business required the services of properly trained business workers. Office workers had to be trained for this growth in American business and the task was accomplished by the private commercial schools.

In order to appreciate the growth of the business college movement it is interesting to refer to a brief history of the Bryant & Stratton Commercial School now operating successfully here in Boston: "The Bryant & Stratton Commercial School of Boston, had its beginning as one of the International Chain of Business Colleges founded by those

pioneers in business education, H. B. Bryant and H. D. Stratton. The first school was established in the city of Cleveland, Ohio, in the summer of 1853. The enterprise was not designed to extend beyond the limits of the city, but in the spring of 1854 a second institution was founded by the same management in the city of Buffalo. The evident success of these schools encouraged the broadening of the field, and in the fall of 1856 the Chicago branch was opened. Then followed in rapid succession the establishment of additional schools until in 1856 forty-six institutions in the United States and Canada were operating under the management of these broad-visioned men. It was on January 2, 1865, that the Boston school opened its doors in the Mercantile Library Building, 32 Summer Street...."[1]

Statistics quoted by Dexter[2] show that in 1870 the number of private commercial schools in the United States was 26, with 5824 pupils; in 1875, 131 schools with an enrollment of 26,109; 1880, 162 schools with 27,146 pupils; 1890, 263 schools with 78,982 pupils; and in 1901, 407 schools with an enrollment of 110,031 pupils.

In spite of the attitude of educators who condemned the teaching of vocational subjects in the public schools, the Boston school committee was criticized in the 1870's for the lack of this kind of education. In order to meet the criticism, the school committee instituted a course of sewing

1 Bryant & Stratton Commercial School - 65th Anniversary 1925, a booklet.
2 Edwin G. Dexter, A History of Education in the U. S. p 416

in the Girl's High School in 1878. In the school reports of 1879 a discussion of shop work to prepare boys for various mechanical pursuits was discussed. In 1880, $15,000 was set aside by the school committee for the installation of shops to train boys in this line of work.

The First Commercial Course

In 1897 the committee on high schools offered a two-year commercial course of study that was adopted on September 14, 1897. Due to the crowded conditions in all the high schools the plan to put this course into operation was impracticable in 1897 without seriously interfering with the regular course of study. It was hoped that the commercial course would be put into effect with the beginning of the term in 1898.

The school committee documents for 1898 report the beginning of the high school commercial course as follows: "The commercial course of study for high schools which was formally adopted by the Board in 1897 was put into effect with the beginning of the term in September last under very favorable auspices. This course is for two years and includes instruction in phonography, typewriting, elements of mercantile law, bookkeeping, commercial geography and arithmetic, and is designed to afford full equipment for pupils who desire to fit themselves for active business life.

Special teachers of recognized ability and long experience have been needed and the results to be obtained will be awaited with great interest. The following tabulation shows the number of pupils who are now taking this course in the several high schools:

Charlestown High School	45
Dorchester High School	60
East Boston High School	63
English High School	72
Girl's High School	146
Roxbury High School	100

[1]

In order to secure more information relative to the subjects taught in this new commercial course, the catalogues on file at the English High School were consulted. The course as taught in this school was undoubtedly similar to the one taught in the other high schools of the city with the exception of the Latin School. The catalogue of 1898-1899 gives the commercial curriculum as follows:

First Year
- English
- History
- Phonography, Penmanship and Commercial Forms
- Commercial Arithmetic and Bookkeeping
- Science
- Drawing
- Physical Training

Second Year
- English
- History
- Phonography, Typewriting, and Elements of Mercantile Law
- Bookkeeping and Commercial Geography
- Physical Training

1 School Committee Report for 1898 - School Document #15

In the catalogue for 1900-1901, it is noted that a third year was offered in the commercial course. The first two years were the same as before with the third year as follows:

English
Civil Government
Spanish
Advanced Bookkeeping
Drawing
Phonography, Typewriting and Business Correspondence

COMMERCIAL HIGH SCHOOL

The introduction of commercial courses in the secondary schools of the country led to the establishment of high schools specializing in commercial education. As early as 1892, Prof. Edmund J. James of the Wharton School of Philadelphia advocated the establishment of high schools specializing in the teaching of business subjects.

Although it was not until 1897-98 that the commercial course was introduced into the Boston high schools, it was but eight years later that the school committee ordered that steps be taken to formulate a commercial curriculum for the proposed high school of commerce.[1]

There is presented in the School Committee report for 1905[2] some very interesting information relative to this new high school. The report states that the private schools for the teaching of business subjects flourished from the time of their establishment some 65 years before this report was written. This great success had been accomplished mainly at the expense of the citizens of Boston who were obliged to send their children to these institutions for business training. Although it was conceded that public commercial education was slow in getting started, it was brought out in this report that the citizens neglected to seek from the school authorities the means of providing their children with practical business training.

1 Minutes of the School Committee, 1905, pp 224-225
2 School Committee Report for 1905, School Document #4

The commercial course which was being followed at the time this new school was proposed in the various high schools throughout the city was not wholly successful, and many of the boys and girls who enrolled for commercial work withdrew to enter some private business college. The commercial high school was proposed to aid those pupils who were dissatisfied with the commercial curriculum and wished to spend most of their time in learning various business subjects, to assist those who circumstances would not permit their attending a private school and to train young men and women so they might enter business with some degree of ability.

The report pleaded for instruction of the most modern type. It specified that ample training should be given in commission, banking, brokerage, wholesale and retail selling, manufacturing, insurance, transportation, real estate, accounting and corporation work. An office course should be provided giving instruction in billing, mimeographing, filing, etc. Figures were presented in the report relative to the number of pupils taking commercial subjects in the Boston high schools and the implication was that there were sufficient commercial pupils to warrant the opening of a high school of business. The report complained that commercial subjects were offered in a variety of ways throughout the city schools and that commercial courses were not uniform or complete and that circumstances and the abuse of the

elective system helped to break up the continuity of the course. These factors would not be evident in a high school of commerce.

The new high school of commerce was opened in 1906 on Winthrop Street, Roxbury.

Course of Study

First Year

Required
English
Penmanship (first half)
Business Knowledge and Practice (Second half)
Physics (half year)
Physical Geography (half year)
Algebra
General History

Second Year

Required
English
German
French or Spanish
Bookkeeping
Commercial Geography (half year)
Local Industries (half year)
Observational Geometry (half year)
Commercial Arithmetic (half year)

Elective
Stenography (to be pursued three years)

Third Year

Required
English
German
French or Spanish
Chemistry
Typewriting
Modern History
Economic History

Third Year (Cont'd)

Elective
Bookkeeping
Stenography
Freehand Drawing

Fourth Year

Required
Commercial English (advertising, correspondence first half)
German
French or Spanish
Algebra (review)
Plain Geometry
Typewriting
Commercial Law (first half)
Civil Government (second half)

Elective
Bookkeeping, Accounting and Typewriting
Stenography and Typewriting
Commercial Design
Chemistry
Economics [1]
Political Economy

One can readily see from this broad curriculum that commercial education was at last taking an important place in the Boston system. This course of study was far more complete than the course offered by the private commercial schools in the city.

The new High School of Commerce enjoyed remarkable success immediately following its opening. The entering class numbered 140 and it was predicted that the school would attract at least 1,000 as soon as accommodations for that number were available. The Business Men's Committee (a group composed of representative Boston business men in-

1 School Committee Report for 1906 - School Document #11

terested in the progress of the school) cooperated with the school whole-heartedly by sponsoring various lectures by Boston business men on business topics. In response to an appeal of this committee, many firms throughout the city contributed very generously toward the establishment of a commercial museum and commercial library in the school. Two scholarships were made available that would enable two young men to go to South America and observe business practices as carried on there.

The enthusiasm showed by the boys for this type of instruction coupled with the cooperation of the business men gave the school a healthy start and lifted commercial education to the place it deserved in public school instruction.

At the meeting of the Business Men's Committee, May, 1907, a series of recommendations were presented to the school board concerning such subjects as the permanent site of the school, the employment of technically-trained teachers, summer employment for students, etc. These recommendations were adopted by the school board, and it was believed they would be of vital assistance in the development of the school. So far as it is known, this was the first time that such cooperation between the school authorities and business men had been effected in this country. The plan, however, was not new. It had been in operation for many years in Germany, and the largest factor in the efficiency

of the German commercial school had been the influence of practical business men.

Cooperation with Business Establishments

That the school was being developed along practical lines is evidenced by several instances enumerated below. During the year, groups of students had been taken into business houses, where, under the direction of competent guides, the young men were shown the workings of mercantile establishments in actual operation. At weekly intervals throughout the school year, business men spoke before the students, talking upon such subjects as, Success in Business, Business Ethics, Business Organization, etc.

A course of lectures dealing with the local industries of Boston was given by competent authorities. These lectures were very valuable to the students giving them reliable information concerning the vocational possibilities in the commercial field of Boston. The course of study of the school permitted a choice of subjects which enabled a young man to prepare himself for one of the three larger divisions of the commercial field; i.e., secretarial work, buying and selling, and accounting.

It is interesting to note that, as a result of a particular study of commercial opportunities, the larger proportion of the young men announced their preference for

the active and creative side of business--buying and selling.

The scheme of summer employment proposed by the Business Men's Committee was a successful venture. Only the boys who had completed the second and third years of high school work were selected as candidates for the summer positions. Boys who had completed only the first year were considered too immature to do effective work. A sufficient number of merchants was found who were willing to give summer employment to boys sent them from the school. It was very evident that there were many more business men who were willing to take boys as permanent employees than those who were willing to give temporary employment. As the business house must necessarily be the practical laboratory of business for the school, it was hoped that a larger number of business men would be willing in succeeding years to cooperate with the school in offering summer places to the boys where they might serve, as it were, a kind of business apprenticeship. The school had no graduating class in June, 1907, but graduated twenty young men in June, 1908. Consequently, the school was unable to meet the demand in 1908, for candidates for permanent employment.

The plan of summer employment was put into operation in a simple and effective manner. A circular letter was sent out to the employment managers of those firms offering assistance. The boys brought with them a statement from

the school covering the items of information of interest to employers. All boys engaged in summer occupations returned to the school upon the opening day and brought with them statements from the several business houses covering the records in the temporary positions. A special circular of information was prepared, which contained a more or less particular account of what the experiment was worth. This circular contained quotations from various letters received from business houses, and showed that, beyond doubt, the experiment was successful and should be continued during succeeding years.

When the High School of Commerce was established, a new plan of organization for Boston high schools was adopted by the school authorities. The new plan lent itself very effectively to the purpose of the High School of Commerce. The old plan of organization did not have in it the opportunities of employing specialists, who should serve as heads of departments of the various subjects in the course. The new school was the first to be organized on the revised basis. The scheme of organization was of great advantage in enabling the school to effect the special purpose of its creation.

Of the 117 students who were in the school at the close of June, 1907, 113 returned to continue the course in September. This proportion is unusually high, and is proof

that the students had a due appreciation of the value of the training afforded them. High standards of school work were insisted upon throughout the year. Students who failed to reach required standards, whether through indifference or through inability, were not allowed to continue in the school.

Growth of the High School of Commerce

With the opening of school in September, 1907, the registration rose to 335 students, a gain over the registration of the previous June of over 180 per cent. The gain would have been even larger had the new building been ready for occupation at the opening of school. It was necessary to organize the school, pending the completion of the new school, in two building near Dudley Street. The inconvenience of these accommodations was marked, there being no opportunity to conduct a number of the most important courses of the curriculum. The Fenway building was occupied October 14, 1907.

The new building was located in the so-called Normal School group on Huntington Avenue. The structure was called the Patrick A. Collins building. Originally designed as a model school in connection with the Normal School, it had been adapted in its interior arrangement of classrooms, laboratories, etc., so that it served excellently for the purpose of the High School of Commerce. Besides the usual classrooms, there was a commercial museum, a commercial

library, commercial geography laboratories, etc.

In September, 1909, the school outgrew its quarters and an annex was established for 178 boys in rooms hired in the Mechanics Building on Huntington Avenue. Even with this annex the room provided was inadequate and a building was needed to accommodate a thousand pupils. There were 588 applicants for admission to the school in September, 1910, but a large number were rejected because of lack of room. Had all of these been admitted the membership would have been 1,138.

The school committee realized that new and larger quarters had to be procured for this school. The enthusiasm displayed by parents and pupils for this school, coupled with the enviable records of graduates in the business world, far exceeded the expectations of those who were instrumental in its founding.

In the Fall of 1915, the new High School of Commerce building on Avenue Louis Pasteur was occupied for the first time. This beautiful building, situated across from the Public Latin School in a fine section of the city, is a fitting example of the progress business education has made in the city of Boston.

The popularity of business education increased many fold and hundreds of young men were attracted to the new school with its splendid equipment for business training.

A graduate course of one year was added to the curriculum and many boys availed themselves of this extra study in order to be better prepared for the needs of business.

The quality of instruction was of the highest order and in this connection it is interesting to note that in 1928[1] five per cent of the Certified Public Accountants of Massachusetts were graduates of this school.

The High School of Commerce was the answer to the need of a separate high school specializing in commercial work. From the time of its founding it has prepared thousands of young men for business, and numbered among its alumni are many prominent business men who are grateful for the training given them in this fine school.

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools 1928 p 46

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMERCIAL CURRICULUM SINCE 1900

With the beginning of the new century, commercial education began to free itself from the shackles of those educators who believed that vocational training was not a function of the public school system. As it is brought out in previous chapters the commercial course was adopted and following that the commercial high school. This chapter attempts to trace the changes in the commercial curriculum in the Boston high schools since 1900.

The influence of business men had become an important factor in public school business training. They were not content with employing office workers who had only received a brief training leading to the acquisition of certain skills. The people of the business world looked to the high schools to supply them with young men and women better trained than the graduates of the private business schools.

The private commercial schools gave short intensive courses in penmanship, bookkeeping, arithmetic, stenography, typewriting, and commercial law. It is only to be expected that the tuition-paying pupils desired to be "educated" for a position in as short a time as possible. The main object of these schools was to turn out a graduate in the shortest possible period and brevity of the training time became one of the strongest arguments in business college

advertising. Publishing houses turned out short-term bookkeeping and shorthand systems. Efficiency, thoroughness, the future prospect of the student were all sacrificed that the student might be graduated in six months or less. The business schools became so popular and attracted so many pupils of high school age that the high school organized commercial courses in self defense. The motive was unworthy. It meant bribing pupils to stay in school and gave no thought to community needs or service to the pupils. As originally adopted, the high school commercial subjects were those taught in the business college and the educators thought they were fulfilling their obligations if they could turn out pupils ready to step into bookkeeping and secretarial positions. They soon realized that the changing concepts of what constituted a business education made it necessary for the high schools to introduce new courses based on business needs.

Broad Elective Plan

In 1900 it was proposed by the superintendent in his annual report[1] that all studies in the high schools should be elective. It was his contention that the pupil would benefit more if he were allowed, under the guidance of teachers and parents, to select those subjects best adapted to his personal needs. The student would not be required to take any study for which he had no use. If the pupil was interested in a commercial course he would select those studies

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, 1900 - p 65

that would best fit him for a business career. If the university was the goal of the student, he would be allowed and advised to take those electives that would prepare him for his advanced study.

In the following year, 1901, the superintendent gave more thought to the elective plan that was first mentioned in the previous year.

At the beginning of his report[1] the superintendent referred to the commercial course which was adopted in the high schools just a few years previous. The superintendent declared that the commercial course was the result of an urgent demand for commercial instruction and that it turned out to be an unsatisfactory piece of work. It was his belief that the commercial course was but a temporary makeshift and that it should soon be replaced by something better.

Further study of the report brings to light the first step in the development of the commercial curriculum in the Boston high schools. It was constructed by taking the first two years in the regular high school course, omitting all the foreign languages, algebra, and geometry and filling their places with phonography, typewriting, commercial arithmetic, bookkeeping, commercial geography, and the elements of mercantile law. These studies combined with the remaining subjects in the regular course constituted the first commercial course.

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools 1901 - p 21

This combination of studies had little to recommend it from an educational point of view and in practice it was found that it was ill-suited to the wants of many. Some pupils would have found a foreign language, algebra, or geometry more serviceable to their commercial studies than ancient history, botany, zoology, or drawing. These last four named subjects were the remaining studies after the commercial subjects had been added to the curriculum. This arrangement did not prove satisfactory and steps to eliminate the difficulty were taken by offering a wide elective plan.

Thus the same plan, which was suggested in 1900, was again advocated by the superintendent in 1901. The superintendent pleaded that pupils should be allowed to take those studies best suited to their personal needs. The process of electing studies would be under the guidance of parents and teachers.

In this same discussion there were two plans presented to make the high school more serviceable to the community. One plan was to classify the educational needs of all pupils, frame a course of study to meet each class of needs, and offer a choice between these courses. The other plan was to draw up a list of studies covering the needs of all pupils and to permit pupils to group themselves according to their needs by choosing the practical studies they would

take in the authorized list.

Although the elective plan allowed a great deal of freedom in selecting studies there were definite requirements specified for diploma awards. Diplomas were granted for quality and quantity of work. The amount of work represented by one hour a week for one year in any elective study or exercise counted as one point towards a diploma. The number of hours a week, or diploma points, assigned to each study was three, four, or five, as determined by the headmasters with the approval of the Board of Supervisors. A full year's work was credited with 20 points, 5 for required exercises and 15 for elective studies in each of the first three years, and 20 for elective studies in the fourth year. The required studies were Gymnastics or Military Drill, Music or some study substituted for Music, and Hygiene.

This broad elective plan was in existence for about nine years when it became apparent that it was not satisfactory. In the annual report of the superintendent for 1910[1] it was brought out that a continuance of the elective plan was not justified b the results. The curriculum lacked definiteness and aim and failed to include subjects essential to success in any line of work. The elective system was intended to be a motivating principle as well as a means of meeting individual differences. However, the

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools 1910, Document #10, p 24

system was based too much upon the exaltation of the student's individuality and not upon the demands of society. It was too subjective; it sent the boy out with the idea that society had to conform to his wishes rather than he had to fit society. The elective system gave no adequate heed to community or social needs, disregarded the economic laws of supply and demand applying to employment, and in the case of the unadapted individual led him to think he was right and that society was wrong. Consequently, the course of study in high schools was amended so as to require certain essential subjects of all pupils such as English, and to place such restrictions upon electives that the whole course of each pupil would represent continuous and progressive education.

Further Improvements in the High School Curriculum

This change improved the high school curriculum by establishing definite aims and objectives to be met by the pupils. Commercial education aimed to prepare for a job, to enable the individual pursuing the work to fit into economic society and to benefit himself by meeting an evident demand for his talent. A considerable number of pupils elected the commercial branches in their high schools. While the applications for admission to the High School of Commerce were far in excess of the capacity of the school, instruction in commercial subjects was also sought by large numbers in correspondence schools, commercial and business

colleges, and either private or semi-private institutions. It was clear, therefore, that there was an increasing demand for this kind of instruction which was only in part met by public school facilities. Public school commercial education failed to recognize the newer demands of a rapidly expanding business world and ignored the increasing complexities of commerce, which had created a whole new array of commercial functions. Arthur D. Dean in the "Workers and the State"[1] called attention to the fact that twenty-five percent of the industrial occupations of 1910 did not exist a generation previously.

Commercial education in the Boston high schools had made substantial developments and improvements since its adoption into the schools. Better accommodations had been provided, more adequate equipment and apparatus furnished, teachers better trained and paid had been employed. In this advance, however, commercial education progressed only with the general improvement in the school system. The people had grown in faith in the worth of commercial education; more money had been spent and more opportunities demanded in the schools. Business education had advanced with the development of the school system, but had not kept pace with the growth of business; it had progressed with the schools, but not with business; it had studied the trend of the school but not the trend of business; its leadership

had been scholastic, not commercial. As a matter of fact, commercial education was of the school, schoolish, and not of the business house, business-like.

Central Clerical School Proposed

In order to meet, in part, this criticism the superintendent recommended the establishment of a Central Clerical School to be in session from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., 12 months of the year. The following features were planned:

(1) Highly specialized work for vocational ends.

(2) Provision for as rapid an advancement as the ability of the pupil permitted.

(3) Graduation depending upon an attainment of a certain degree of proficiency regardless of the length of attendance.

At a meeting of the school committee held on February 7, 1910, an order was passed to establish such a school to begin July 11, 1910 and at a later meeting the following general plan for its conduct was submitted by the Board of Superintendents:

(1) That pupils, residents of Boston, who had successfully completed two years of the regular high school course were to be admitted to the school in the order of application.

(2) That the subjects taught were to be bookkeeping, English, commercial arithmetic, phonography, type-

writing, penmanship, filing, and office machines.

(3) That these subjects were to be presented with the object in view of preparing pupils for commercial or secretarial work.

(4) That much freedom was to be allowed pupils in the selection of subjects of study.

(5) That pupils were to be advanced as rapidly as their ability permitted and that a certificate would be granted at any time the subject was satisfactorily completed.

However, in June, 1910, it became apparent that financial conditions for the fiscal year would not permit the opening of the school and the order establishing it was "reluctantly rescinded".

There is no further mention of a commercial school that would hold sessions from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., 12 months a year. In 1914, the Boston Clerical School was established and it may be inferred that this was an outgrowth of the earlier proposal. The Boston Clerical School, which was in the nature of a municipal business college, would not be classed as a day high school inasmuch as it admitted only those girls who had completed at least two years above the eighth grade. In fact, a large percentage of the pupils enrolling were graduates of an approved high school.

The next step in the development of the commercial

curriculum took place in 1911 when an order establishing an intensified commercial course at the Roxbury High School was passed by the school committee.[1] The order which was designed to give an intensive course for girls provided that no additional boys were to be admitted to this school and the boys who were already in the school would be permitted to continue until they were graduated or permanently discharged.

This intensified course was introduced for two distinct purposes. First: To offer to those elementary school graduates who would not otherwise attend high school, special vocational training as stenographers or bookkeepers; a short course that could be completed in two years or less, and would save them the expense of attending a private school. Second: To afford additional vocational training to pupils taking the regular commercial course by substituting for extraneous subjects at present required for a diploma more work in phonography, typewriting, or bookkeeping. Three divisions were started in the freshman class in September, 1911. The program of study for the two year phonography course was as follows:[2]

First year

English	10	periods
Phonography	8	"
Typewriting	6	"
Office Hour	1	"
Physical Training and Study	5	"

1 Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools 1911, Document #15 pp 32-34
2 Ibid. Document 11 pp 13, 14

Second year

English	7 periods
Phonography	8 "
Typewriting	4 "
Office Hour	1 "
Commercial Arith.	3 "
Mercantile Law	3 "
Hygiene	1 "
Physical Training and Study	3 "

The two year bookkeeping course was as follows:

First year

English	10 periods
Bookkeeping	4 "
Commercial Arith.	4 "
Penmanship	4 "
Office Hour	1 "
Physical Training and Study	7 "

Second year

English	7 periods
Bookkeeping	8 "
Commercial Arith.	4 "
Mercantile Law	3 "
Office Hour	1 "
Hygiene	1 "
Physical Training and Study	6 "

At the time this intensified course was under discussion the commercial course in the general high schools of the city was growing rapidly and many boys and girls were attracted by the business subjects offered. Pupils were not allowed a free rein in the selection of studies and were expected to complete certain definite requirements before a diploma was awarded. These requirements were in direct contradiction to the plan that was in vogue from 1900

to 1910. It may be recalled, however, that the elective plan was revised in 1910.

Diploma Requirements

and

Complete Commercial Curriculum

The diploma requirements for the ten general high schools read as follows:[1] "Diplomas are granted for quantity and quality of work as follows: (a) the amount of work represented by one period a week for one year in any study counts one point toward a diploma, (b) two periods of unprepared recitations or laboratory work are considered equivalent to one period of prepared work, (c) a full year's work consists of twenty points. A diploma is awarded to pupils who have won eighty points which usually requires four years attendance.

"Required subjects and points for a diploma:

English	at least		12	points
Same Foreign Language or Phonography and Type.	"	"	7	"
Mathematics or Bookkeeping	"	"	4	"
History	"	"	3	"
Science	"	"	3	"
Physical Training	"	"	8	"
Hygiene	"	"	1	"

Plus sufficient points in elective subjects to make a total of 80 points".

Following this tabulation of requirements there is a suggested commercial curriculum which reads as follows:

1 Report of the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, 1912, Document #10, p 40

First Year

English
French, German, or Spanish
Bookkeeping I
History
Hygiene
Choral Practice
Physical Training

Second Year

English II
French, German, or Spanish II
Phonography and Type. I
Bookkeeping II
Algebra or Introductory Science
Choral Practice II
Physical Training II

Third Year

English III
Commercial Geography
Phonography and Type II and Bookkeeping III
-or-
Phonography and Type II

Elect one:
French, German, or Spanish
Bookkeeping III
Physics I or Chemistry I
History or Civics
Drawing

Required:
Choral Practice III
Physical Training III

Fourth Year

English IV
Phonography and Type III

Electives
French, German, or Spanish
Mercantile Law
Civil Service
Economics
Industrial History
History, Science, or Drawing

In 1913 there were 6,000 pupils taking the commercial course in the general high schools. This course had for its main objective the preparation of young men and women for stenographic and bookkeeping positions. Yet, it was estimated in a survey conducted at that time that only about 15% of the commercial positions called for these special abilities and that a large part of the work in a business house consisted of salesmanship, care of stock, etc.

Surveys Leading to a Better Commercial Course

When it was ascertained that the commercial course

was only preparing pupils for 15% of the available business positions, it was readily conceded that the curriculum was not fulfilling its purpose and that the course of study was in need of an immediate change. In order to formulate a curriculum best adapted to the needs of the business world it was proposed that two surveys be conducted by the Boston Chamber of Commerce and the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in cooperation with the business establishments of the city. These surveys were under the supervision of Assistant Superintendent of Schools Frank V. Thompson who was in charge of commercial education at that time.

The Chamber of Commerce sent out 5,000 question blanks to clerical and non-clerical workers in a highly diversified group of business establishments to determine what subjects taught in school were chiefly of value in their occupation. Question blanks were presented to about 200 business houses in order to determine the character of training required of employees. The results of this survey were as follows: (1) The better positions were reached eventually through the non-clerical rather than the clerical side of business, (2) There were so few men occupied or needed in clerical positions, probably only a few hundred, that it is not worth while for boys to devote themselves to stenographic training, (3) Statistics show clearly the value of a high school education for advancement in business, (4) The technical

subjects most used in business taught in school were ranked in the following order: penmanship, mental arithmetic, bookkeeping, typewriting and stenography.

The investigation conducted by the Women's Educational and Industrial Union concerned 1177 women in offices; 2% were bookkeepers, 57% were clerks, and 40% were stenographers and typists. The survey made a comparison of the education given by private business schools with that given by the high schools and the results seemed to show that the former produced workers with inadequate general education and the latter produced workers with inadequate preparation in the special business subjects. As a result of these reports Asst. Supt. Thompson directed his attention to revising the commercial curriculum that would best prepare the commercial pupils for business.

In his recommendations, Mr. Thompson pleaded that the form and content of business training must be drawn from business itself. He declared that commercial education in the future would not be limited to the preparation for a few commercial vocations such as bookkeepers and stenographers but should expand to include preparation for a wide range of different activities. One can see from his introductory recommendations that this executive was more or less disturbed with the results of the surveys conducted in the city that showed such a small percentage using the

studies presented in the commercial courses of the high schools.

Mr. Thompson pointed out that with the changing business conditions education should be in a position to prepare boys and girls for the wide range of occupations found in industry. Opportunity for practice under actual conditions was regarded as of more than ordinary importance. In an argument for actual business practice it was pointed out that the medical student was given the opportunity of hospital experience, the normal school graduate was given opportunity for practice teaching, the trade school student worked in the school shop which commonly turned out a product sold under competitive terms in an open market or else worked part time in an actual shop under real conditions. The commercial course granted the pupils the privilege of working in a model office in order to get as near actual practice as possible. Yet the model office work was concerned largely with teaching bookkeeping, stenography, typewriting, and office practice, while the surveys showed that the large percentage of business employees were not engaged in these pursuits. Although this "model office" arrangement in the high school was very commendable it had many limitations. This "office" could not begin to prepare boys and girls for the many diverse occupations found in business establishments. It was pointed out that actual business

experience along with the high school study was essential for a proper commercial training.

Salesmanship and Merchandising

Members of the school committee took kindly to Mr. Thompson's suggestions and accordingly salesmanship was introduced in the high schools in 1914, under the direction of Mrs. Lucinda W. Prince. Through her training school in salesmanship, Mrs. Prince secured teachers and organized the work in nine high schools. She also effected an arrangement with 12 of the leading stores whereby the students could get store experience on Saturdays, Mondays, and school holidays. The course of study included salesmanship, textiles, design, commercial arithmetic, and English closely related to the needs of salesmanship students.

Students in the commercial course were allowed to elect in their junior and senior years the salesmanship course and devote most of their time to this and related subjects. A director of the work was appointed who acted as coordinator between the store and school making arrangements for the work of the students in the stores.

The cooperative merchandising plan enjoyed remarkable success and it served as an example to other cities many of which added salesmanship to the curricula of their high schools. Many cities sent representatives to Boston to study the plan in order that they might introduce the same

curriculum in their school systems.

The cooperative plan took a strong hold upon the schools and business institutions of the city. There seemed to be a growing opinion that this was the great means of connecting schools with business life--utilizing many forms of business for the practical experience and the schools for the theoretical knowledge.

In 1917 there were ten general high schools that offered, in addition to other courses, a broad commercial curriculum. The ten general high schools being operated in Boston at that time were the following:

Brighton High School
Charlestown High School
Dorchester High School
East Boston High School
English High School
Girl's High School
Hyde Park High School
Roxbury High School

This commercial course of study although generous in the number of electives offered, was the best ever presented in the Boston high schools and the inclusion of a merchandising course along with the secretarial and accounting course seemed to indicate that the efforts of Asst. Supt. Thompson a few years previous was in a large measure responsible for this revision.

The commercial curriculum remained very much the same in the years following 1917. The salesmanship course attracted many pupils and the cooperative plan introduced in 1914

made remarkable progress. In 1924, the salesmanship course was being given in ten high schools, three evening high schools, and the Continuation School. At that time there were 1400 pupils availing themselves of the opportunity to train for the profession of selling. The salesmanship course in the general high schools was of four kinds:

(1) General salesmanship (also with Merchandising for boys in Grades XI and XII.)

(2) Retail selling for the girls in Grades XI, XII

(3) Cooperative week-in and week-out retail salesmanship given in Grades XI and XII

(4) Short unit course in salesmanship for store class.

All the salesmanship classes conducted in the Boston public schools had as a basis of instruction essential practical experience of store work. Pupils in all salesmanship classes were required to work in an approved mercantile establishment a minimum of at least 15 days before they were given credit in the course. They were encouraged to work Saturdays, every day for one, two or three weeks before Christmas, and possible a week or two before Easter. They were employed as salespeople, markers, workers on stock, delivery workers, and shippers. They were paid a minimum of $2 a day and many pupils earned from $100 to $350 a year in this way.

The objectives of this course were as follows:

(1) To train pupils for the profitable occupations for which training has fully established its value.

(2) To assist the merchant in solving his problem of serving the public more efficiently.

(3) To open a new way for the placement of the high school graduate.

(4) To train pupils to accept responsibilities by placing them in contact with actual business before leaving school.

Mr. Louis J. Fish, Commercial Coordinator in 1924, reviews this phase of commercial education as follows:

"The Merchants of Boston through the Retail Board of the Chamber of Commerce are chiefly responsible with the school authorities for the success of the salesmanship courses. A committee of the personnel group from the stores and a committee of headmasters from the high schools administer the course. Meetings are held frequently and problems are discussed.... The merchants are appreciative of the efforts being made by the school authorities to instruct and make available trained workers for the field of selling. The cooperation of the merchants has added a great deal of value to the course and has proved very beneficial to the pupils and at the same time it has simplified the work of the teachers. The school authorities heartily

approve of experience under actual business conditions as a fitting complement to the theoretical training in salesmanship. School cooperation has been so well developed on the basis of practical usefulness to the stores and greater opportunity for development to the pupils that many stores depend upon the high schools to furnish them the extra aid that is needed on Saturdays and at holiday times.

Requests from the stores for services of the high school pupils are referred to a commercial coordinator who takes up the matter with teachers of salesmanship in the various schools. The teachers arrange for the work and keep on file a record of the store experience, the number of days employed, the compensation, etc....

During the month of December, 1923, over 1200 pupils went out to work in the Boston stores and earned a total of $39,808.80."[1]

During the past ten years commercial education in the Boston day high schools has enjoyed phenomenal success. The subjects comprising the commercial curriculum have attracted thousands of boys and girls intent on receiving a training that would prepare them for the business world.

Commercial education in the Boston day high schools has been broader and more complete than the business school offerings and the challenge hurled by the private business school during the middle and latter part of the past century

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools 1924, Document #17, Report of the Commercial Coordinator Louis J. Fish, pp 172 - 178

was adequately and successfully met by the Boston school system. Business training in the city schools did not limit itself to training clerks and office workers. Its main purpose was not the teaching of certain skills to be acquired by the student in a short space of time in order that he might find employment in a mercantile establishment. It directed its attention to giving, in addition to the technical business knowledge, some thought that would give the students an insight into the vast business world around them.

In the day high schools throughout the city the following subjects are open to members of the commercial course: stenography, bookkeeping, merchandising, salesmanship, commercial law, typewriting, commercial geography, office practice, penmanship, economics, history of commerce, business knowledge and practice, and commercial design.

The Commercial Council, a group composed of high school commercial department heads, which was established in 1908 for the purpose of bettering business education through cooperative effort in various matters of departmental administration, has made valuable contributions to the curriculum from time to time.

The past decade has witnessed a growing improvement in the methods of teaching these subjects. The rigid requirements that must be met by teachers before they are allowed

to enter the Boston service, the addition of modern up-to-date business office machinery, the valuable interchange of ideas among schools under the guidance of a competent head of commercial education have all contributed toward making a better system of commercial education in the Boston day high schools.

CONCLUSION

"Although training for business is of more recent origin than any other line of scientific training, there are more students taking this type of training today than there are in all other unit vocational schools combined. The expansion of the curriculum in high schools was brought about by the demands of the pupils, the wishes of the parents, the needs of business and the threat of migration to the business college. As a result of these definitely voiced demands the commercial course in our high school has come into its own".[1]

The subject matter in this thesis is in a way an elaboration of the above quotation, and the four factors responsible for the development of the curriculum as outlined by Mr. Fish, are discussed within the pages of this dissertation.

It might be well to give some thought in this conclusion to the present status of commercial education and to determine whether there is room for further advancement in this type of vocational instruction.

In this connection, Mr. Raymond G. Laird, Head Master of the Boston Clerical School, was authorized by the school committee on March 5, 1928 to make a survey of commercial education in the cities of Worcester, Providence, New Haven, Brooklyn, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Detroit, Fordson, Mich., Cleveland, and Buffalo. It is from

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools 1928 - p 47

Mr. Laird's report[1] that the following conclusions concerning the success attained by Boston and the future of this type of education was drawn. It was assumed that the schools in the above named twelve cities represented a fair cross-section of organized commercial instruction in the eastern portion of the United States.

The purpose of this survey can best be set forth in Mr. Laird's own words:

"The object of the trip was to learn (after the phenomenal growth in recent years in this branch of education) whether in view of all the circumstances it might appear that training for business has reached its height and that such training is likely to become stationary or to resurge in the future; to ascertain if, in those cities, there were noteworthy achievements or experiments, the knowledge or adoption of which might be valuable to Boston schools; and to obtain an understanding of how commercial education, as conducted in the Boston school system, compares with that of the cities named."

Mr. Laird was granted every courtesy throughout his trip and reported that the Boston system was highly commended for its plan of business education. Teachers and school officials in the communities marveled at the numbers Boston was educating for business life because the traditions of the city generated in their minds was classical rather

1 Annual Report of the Superintendent, Boston Public Schools 1928 pp 55 - 98

than commercial.

As to the future of commercial training it is interesting to review the comments of this head master who had the opportunity to meet many teachers on this survey. It may be recalled that the fear of commercial education just a few years previous was that it was educating too many bookkeepers, stenographers, and typists and in order to relieve this situation a broad course of salesmanship and merchandising was introduced. Mr. Laird's observations seemed to indicate that the pendulum will swing the other way and that the subjects of shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping will be the most emphasized subjects of the curriculum. He declares that those who have studied these three subjects do not regard the learning time as wasted even though they did not use this knowledge in business.

In support of his contention that more thought will again be given to shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping, Mr. Laird refers to a survey[1] embracing the part-time study habits of 4336 clerical workers in 54 concerns in 31 cities of 15 states, and Canada. It was evident from the returns that from two to three times as many of these office people were taking shorthand, typewriting, bookkeeping, and Business English, as were studying office practice, business management, calculating machine operation, business law, salesmanship, and economics. In spite of the claim that business

1 Harvard Bulletins in Education, #12, 1927, p99

schools, both public and private, are turning out more stenographers than business can absorb, it seems significant that these young people, who in their daily employment were in constant contact with bookkeepers and stenographers, should use part of their after-work time to qualify for these fields.

The teaching of shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping in secondary schools cannot be over-emphasized. Whether or not the graduates use this training in business should not be the only consideration in determining their value. Bookkeeping as a training for keeping personal records, shorthand for personal note-taking, and typewriting for personal correspondence all seem to indicate that these subjects are exceptionally find vocational training for anyone.

Although these subjects are of high vocational value, one cannot lose sight of the fact that the other studies in the high school commercial curriculum are essential and contribute toward making the course a well-balanced training for life.

SUMMARY

Commercial education did not play a prominent part in the early years of Boston's educational history. There were subjects taught in the Public Latin School, which was founded in 1635, that later became an important part of the high school commercial course. However, it cannot be said that business education had its birth in this school because the main objective of the school was preparing boys for the university.

The English High School was established in 1821 in order to prepare boys for the "mercantile and mechanical" pursuits of life. The commercial course in the Boston high schools had its beginning in this school.

A high school for Girls was established in Boston in 1825 but was abandoned in 1828. In 1854 high school classes for girls were introduced into the Normal School. In this curriculum were subjects that later formed an important part of the commercial curriculum.

In common with other communities, Boston was late in devising an adequate plan leading to the appointment of teachers. At the turn of the twentieth century more thought was given to the selection of teachers, and with the establishment of the Board of Examiners in 1924, rules and regulations were adopted that would insure a competent teaching

force.

Inasmuch as the public schools were slow in offering commercial education, the private business schools furnished a large percentage of office help during the nineteenth century. The element of time was an important consideration in the formation of the business school curriculum. The short-time offerings of the business schools did not meet with the whole-hearted approval of the business men. This factor coupled with the demands of pupils and parents that the city should furnish commercial education, led to the adoption of the commercial course. The first commercial course was introduced in 1898.

The commercial course attracted large numbers and this success was followed by the opening of the High School of Commerce in 1906. This school was established by the School Board in order to give boys a better business training than they would receive in a day high school. This school enjoyed remarkable success but its accommodations were inadequate to meet the demands of all the boys who desired entrance. Various buildings were used to house the classes and in 1915 the new High School of Commerce building on Avenue Louis Pasteur was opened.

As a result of two surveys conducted in 1913 to determine the value of business subjects taught, it was felt that the commercial course was not preparing the majority of

pupils for business. In order to correct this state of affairs a broad course in salesmanship was introduced into the curriculum. The cooperative salesmanship plan was adopted and many of the Boston stores cooperated with the schools in allowing pupils to work part-time in order that they might obtain some practical experience in store work.

Although late in becoming an important part of the Boston school system, the commercial course in the day high schools is now a well developed curriculum and a large percentage of boys and girls elect this plan of work for their high school education.

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